

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 09430 281215Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-01 SSM-03
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P 281209Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7245
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

CONNIDENTIAL CAIRO 09430

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, EG, IS, US
SUBJ: CONOCO REQUEST FOR OPINION RE CONCLUSION OF NEW
- EXPLORATION/PRODUCTION COVERING ACREAGE IN OCCUPIED
- SINAI

1. CONOCO/EGYPT MANAGER SQUYRES CALLED ON AMBASSADOR MARCH 27 TO SEEK USG OPINION ON CONOCO'S SIGNING NEW EXPLORATION/PRODUCTION AGREEMENT WITH EGYPTIAN GENERAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION FOR RIGHTS TO ACREAGE IN SINAI STILL OCCUPIED BY ISRAELIS. ACCORDING SQUYRES, CONOCO HAS PUT TOGETHER PROPOSAL FOR AREA IN SINAI WHICH ON NORTH WOULD RUN ALONG COASTAL STRIP FROM EASTERN EDGE OF BUFFER ZONE TO EASTERN SIDE OF BARDAWEEL MARSHES (ADJACENT TO EXISTING CONOCO CONCESSION IN BUFFER ZONE). AREA WOULD RUN WHOLE LENGTH OF SINAI PENINSULA TO RAS MUHAMMAD AND WOULD BE OF VARYING WIDTHS IN SOUTHERN PORTIONS. SPECIFICALLY SQUYRES WANTED TO KNOW IF "IT WOULD CAUSE USG ANY PROBLEM" IF CONOCO MADE SUCH PROPOSAL.

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 09430 281215Z

2. AMBASSADOR REVIEWED FOR SQUYRES USG LEGAL POSITION ON EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES BY GOI IN OCCUPIED EGYPTIAN TERRITORY AND EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT LEGALLY, EGYPTIANS COULD MAKE SUCH AGREEMENT WITH CONOCO. CONOCO WOULD HAVE TO BE AWARE, HOWEVER, OF RISKS INVOLVED AND FACT THAT ACREAGE MIGHT NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR UNDETERMINED TIME. SQUYRES SAID COMPANY HAD TAKEN THIS INTO CONSIDERA-

TION AND WOULD MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PROTECT ITS INTERESTS DURING CONTINUING OCCUPATION. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, WOULD BE BEST JUDGE ON BOTH LEGAL AS WELL AS PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF MOVE AT THIS TIME AND PROMISED QUERY WASHINGTON FOR ITS OPINION.

3. COMMENT: INITIATIVE FOR SINAI ACREAGE CLEARLY CONOCO'S. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT GOE REACTION WILL BE TO PROPOSAL DESCRIBED BY CONOCO IF IT IS IN FACT SUBMITTED. OUR JUDGMENT WOULD BE THAT EGPC WILL REACT CAUTIOUSLY AS IT DID PREVIOUSLY WITH ACREAGE IN WESTERN SINAI EVENTUALLY GIVEN TO GULF AND CONOCO.

.4. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO CONOCO PLAN SO THAT WE CAN PASS IT TO SQUYRES NEXT WEEK OR TEN DAYS.
EILTS

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Message Attributes

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